

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SSC-01 /069 W

-----281133Z 027139 /22

P R 281035Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6356

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 1076

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AG

SUBJECT: ALGERIAN GOVERNMENTAL REORGANIZATION ENDS

REF: ALGIERS 1019

1. PRESS ANNOUNCED APRIL 28 THAT GOVERNMENTAL REORGANIZATION BEGUN APRIL 21 HAD ENDED AND THAT PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE WOULD PRESIDE FIRST MEETING OF NEW CABINET MAY 3. ANNOUNCEMENT NOTED THAT, WITH CABINET REORGANIZATION COMPLETE, BOUMEDIENE WOULD PROCEED "METHODICALLY" WITH SETTING UP OF OTHER INSTITUTIONS CALLED FOR IN NATIONAL CHARTER AND CONSTITUTION. THESE WILL INCLUDE HIGH SECURITY COUNCIL AND ACCOUNTS COURT.

2. CHANGES ANNOUNCED ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. ABDELMALEK BENHABYLES NAMED MINISTER OF JUSTICE. BENHABYLES IS CAREER DIPLOMAT WHOSE LAST POST WAS SECRETARY GENERAL OF FOREIGN MINISTRY.

B. ABDELGHANI AKBI, FORMER INTERIOR MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL, NAMED MINISTER OF TOURISM, REPLACING ABDELAZIZ MAOUI WHO WAS "CALLED TO OTHER FUNCTIONS."

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C. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE "STRENGTHENED AND REINFORCED" WITH COUNCIL OF THE REVOLUTION MEMBER TAYEBI LARBI REMAINING MINISTER. TWO AGRICULTURAL SECRETARIATS OF STATE CREATED, ONE FOR VEGETABLE, AND THE OTHER FOR ANIMAL, PRODUCTION. SECRETARIES OF STATE NOT NAMED.

D. FORMER MINISTER FOR TRADITIONAL EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, MOULOUD KASSIM NAIT BELKACEM, NAMED MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS CHANGE REPRESENTS ELIMINATION OF MINISTRY FOR TRADITIONAL EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS.

E. AHMED TALEB IBRAHIMI, FORMER MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE, NAMED MINISTER-COUNSELOR TO PRESIDENT.

3. OTHER HIGH-LEVEL CHANGES ANNOUNCED ARE:

A. SMAIL HAMDANI, FORMER DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF PRESIDENCY, NAMED SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE GOVERNMENT REPLACING ABDELKADER HADJ ALI WHO WAS "CALLED TO OTHER FUNCTIONS."

B. LT. COLONEL ABDELMADJID ALAHOUM, FORMER CHIEF OF PRESIDENTIAL PROTOCOL, NAMED SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY.

4. NO VICE PRESIDENT OR PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCED.

5. IN REVIEWING THESE AND EARLIER CHANGES WITH US, OUR ALGERIAN AND DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS ARE ALMOST, IF NOT QUITE, UNANIMOUS IN VIEW THAT RESHUFFLE REPRESENTS FIRST AND FOREMOST DEMOTION FOR ABDESSELAM. ONLY DISSENTING VOICE IS THAT OF FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE WHO ASSERTS THAT REGIME INTENDS TO GIVE MORE TO CONSUMERS AND HAS THEREFORE PUT ITS BEST MAN IN CHARGE OF LIGHT INDUSTRIAL SECTOR. SOURCE ARGUES ALSO THAT ABDESSELAM WILL RETAIN HIS RESPONSIBILITY FOR NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE.
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6. ALL SOURCES AGREE THAT REMOVAL OF COUNCIL OF THE REVOLUTION MEMBERS COLONELS BENCHERIF AND DRAIA FROM THEIR GENDARMERIE AND POLICE COMMANDS REPRESENTS DEMOTION FROM THEM AND MAY PRESAGE FURTHER ATROPHYING OF COUNCIL OF THE REVOLUTION'S POWERS. THERE ARE RUMORS, WHICH WE DISCOUNT, THAT DRAIA REFUSED TO TAKE UP HIS DUTIES AS TRANSPORT MINISTER.

7. COMMENT: WE OFFER FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON SECOND TRANCHE OF CABINET REORGANIZATION:

A. ALTHOUGH RUMOR MILL WORKED OVERTIME ON REPORTS OF HIS DEMISE AND/OR ELEVATION TO PREMIERSHIP, FON MIN BOUTEFLIKA SEEMS TO HAVE STAYED WHERE HE WAS. INDEED, HE, INTERIOR MINISTER ABDELGHANI, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE PLAN KAMEL ABDELLAH KHODJA, AND DEFENSE MINISTER BOUMEDIENE ARE ONLY MEMBERS OF OLD CABINET WHOSE POWERS HAVE NOT CHANGED IN SOME WAY.

B. MINISTRY OF JUSTICE WOULD SEEM TO BE RATHER HOT SPOT FOR BENHABYLES WHOSE LOW KEY, PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH TO GOVERNMENT HAS MADE HIM SOMETHING LESS THAN FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH.

C. SUPPRESSION OF MINISTRY OF TRADITIONAL EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, AND MOVING OF MOULOUD KASSIM NAIT BELKACEM TO APPARENTLY CEREMONIAL POSITION, WILL PLEASE WOMEN AND PROGRESSIVE ELEMENTS. TRADITIONAL EDUCATION HAD IN ANY CASE BEEN TAKEN OVER DE FACTO BY MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SUMMER OF 1976.

D. WE SUSPECT THAT TAYEBI LARBI'S OVERSEEING OF AGRICULTURAL SECRETARIATS OF STATE WILL BE CEREMONIAL. HE HAS LONG BEEN CONSIDERED INCAPABLE OF DEALING WITH COUNTRY'S FALTERING AGRICULTURAL SECTOR.

7. COMPLETE LIST OF CABINET FOLLOWS BY UNCLASSIFIED
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SEPTTEL. BIOS BY POUCH MAY 4.LYNE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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TAGS: PINT, AG
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